

3

Operations



Technical Cooperation



Given the increasingly complex global development challenges facing the world today, international organizations have been focused on improving the effectiveness of development projects. At the TaiwanICDF, we have been equally active in seeking to improve operations, gradually adopting many of the practices of international organizations, continuing to pursue complementary measures and adopting objective, rational methods of analysis. This is helping us to understand the problems we encounter during the course of project implementation so that we can improve and progress, and find a way to carry out successful projects.

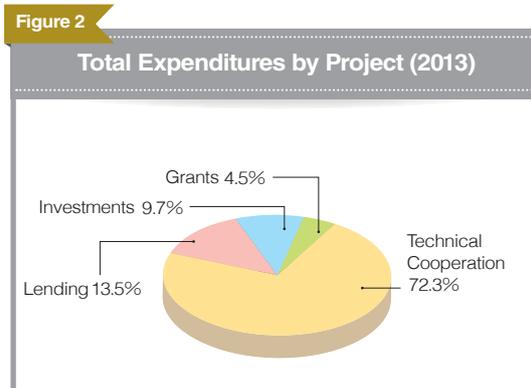
The TaiwanICDF is Taiwan's professional development agency and we have an obligation to carry out our job to the best of our abilities. Through a range of professional services such as technical cooperation, lending and investment, international human resources development, humanitarian assistance and volunteering, we are drawing on Taiwan's comparative advantages, responding to partners' needs and assisting them to build capacity, while also respecting the Paris Declaration's focus on ownership, managing for results and other principles. This is allowing us to enhance the effectiveness of foreign aid and pursue sustainable development.

In terms of projects and funding, total expenditures associated with all TaiwanICDF

projects in 2013 amounted to NT\$1.87 billion (including disbursements of lending and investments of NT\$432.29 million, and technical assistance and grants of NT\$1.43 billion). The largest share of expenditures was given over to technical assistance (72.3 percent, or NT\$1.35 billion), and then projects funded by lending (13.5 percent, or NT\$251.12 million), grants (4.5 percent, or NT\$84.90 million) and investments (9.7 percent, or NT\$181.17 million).

Emphasizing Ownership through Technical Cooperation

The TaiwanICDF operates Taiwan Technical Missions and carries out specially commissioned projects on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign





Capacity building is an integral part of the promotion of sustainable development. Pictured here, Daniel Lee (right), a technician working on the Horticulture Project with the Taiwan Technical Mission in Kiribati, works with local women from a seedling nursery as part of capacity building activities.

Affairs (MOFA), besides engaging in its own, independently funded technical assistance projects.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of our aid projects and to maximize the benefits brought about by our resources, in recent years all of our new projects have been developed in accordance with the principle of ownership as set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. With this, all projects are directed toward meeting partner countries' actual needs, conforming to the economic, social, environmental aspects of their national development strategies, and draw on Taiwan's own advantages in development in responding to such needs.

We have also invited the relevant units and external experts to participate in project appraisal and review operations, dispatching personnel to partner countries during the various phases of the project cycle to carry out identification missions, fact-finding missions and appraisal missions. During this process we engage in joint consultations with partner country governments and stakeholders to help partner governments identify core problems, to appraise the feasibility of projects and develop strategies to resolve such issues, raising the integrity and effectiveness of projects.

When entering the project implementation phase, the partner countries take the lead in

implementation, while we dispatch project managers. Their role is to provide guidance and monitor a project, to provide technical assistance and consultation as needed, and to assist the cooperating unit to build capacity by organizing training. This promotes the sustainable development of projects.

Work done in 2013 by overseas missions, and as part of commissioned projects and technical assistance projects, is described below.

■ Overseas Missions

In 2013, MOFA commissioned the TaiwanICDF to oversee the operations of 29 technical, medical, industrial service and trade missions in 29 countries, where a total of 57 bilateral cooperation projects were under implementation, overseen by 117 technicians.

A total of 11 technical missions were in operation across Asia-Pacific and the Middle East, with 21 projects covering agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, aquaculture, agribusiness, landscaping, and transport and infrastructure. Three technical missions and one medical mission were in operation in Africa, implementing seven projects covering agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, aquaculture and medicine. Fourteen technical missions were in operation in Central and South America and the Caribbean, implementing 29 projects covering agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, aquaculture, food

processing, metals processing, marketing and SME consultation.

By the end of 2013 a total of 29 projects had been successfully handed over to partner countries and remained under operation. The remaining 28 projects continued to be implemented according to schedule. These projects are strengthening capacity building among host country personnel to achieve development synergies through technical cooperation.

■ **Commissioned Projects**

In 2013, we handled 17 MOFA-commissioned projects, including professional training, ICT, the production of local specialties, and horticulture and aquaculture. Examples of these projects include the Aquaculture Project in Belize, the Les Cayes Cereal Crops Development Project in Haiti, the Banana Black Sigatoka Disease Prevention and Treatment Project in St. Lucia, the Consultancy Project for the Management of Hydraulic Systems and Rice Production in the Bagré Reclamation Area in Burkina Faso, and the Feed Production Project in Paraguay.

To illustrate some of our project management activities in 2013, below we explain the implementation status of the Aquaculture Project in Belize and the Papaya Export Project in Petén, Guatemala.

1. Aquaculture Project, Belize: Conditions in Belize are well suited to the development of freshwater aquaculture, but development has been constrained by the high costs of fish fry and feed. This has resulted in inadequate investment in basic production, so that tilapia production cannot compete with neighboring countries.

With Taiwan's abundant know-how and experience of aquaculture, we are providing assistance through the implementation of a five-year Aquaculture Project (2012-2017). To improve the development of Belizean tilapia production, the project involves the establishment of a tilapia hatchery, the introduction of a high-quality broodstock, the development of an alternative, low-cost feed and the introduction of Taiwanese know-how and experience in raising the species.

The project has already undertaken the breeding of 278,250 fry, and promoted the use of feed among fish farmers through the development of a low-cost alternative. We have also assisted local fish farmers to establish associations, promoted modern aquaculture techniques and lowered production costs through the joint

purchasing of materials. Therefore, in 2014, the newly constructed tilapia hatchery will receive a high-quality brood stock from Guatemala, to improve the quality of Belize's own stocks of fry.

2. Papaya Export Project in Petén, Guatemala:

To diversify production and to promote the development of underdeveloped regions, the Guatemalan government has been planning to develop papaya production in the Petén region and to develop non-traditional exports. This four-year project (2011-2014) intends to establish a comprehensive supply chain for agro-exports, and a base from which to demonstrate production and provide guidance to smallholders. A packing plant has also been established for the grading and packing of papayas, and we have provided assistance in the establishment and operation of a papaya marketing association, allowing us to transfer techniques.

From 2013 to date, 22 hectares of demonstration orchards have already been established, yielding 41,731 papayas. We also organized 13 seminars on papaya cultivation and assisted in the grading and packing of 11,770 boxes of fruit, and the export of 67 shipping containers to the United States. These activities have promoted the development of local enterprises, and achieved the objective of improving the livelihood of farmers and rural residents.

To strengthen cooperation with our partners, we continue to develop new projects. At present, we have 59 such projects under development, including the Latin America and Caribbean Bamboo Industries Development Project, the Land Use and Environmental Transformation Management Project in Guatemala and the Plant Germplasm Conservation Project in São Tomé and Príncipe. Each of these initiatives follows the project cycle, with operations being planned through identification, preparation, appraisal and approval phases, so as to fulfill our Vision 2022: "Become the best partner for sustainable development by 2022."

■ **Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance (TA) is an important element of the TaiwanICDF's technical cooperation operations. Based on partner countries' needs, we help them to develop technical assistance projects that meet their national development strategies in line with a range of social, cultural, economic and political factors. The themes of many of these projects look to draw on the comparative advantages

that Taiwan gained during its own development process, including environmental protection, agriculture, public health, education and ICT.

Focusing on human resources, technology and capital, and through personnel training, research, services, technology and knowledge transfer, project implementation assists partners to obtain the skills they need. During the formative phases of a project, we make use of local studies and provide consulting services, allowing partners to confirm the overall direction and feasibility of projects, in order to meet their actual needs.

■ Investing in Agriculture, Energy and other New Projects

To support our partners' development needs within the agriculture and energy sectors, we are investing in new technical assistance projects.

Our Latin America and Caribbean Bamboo Industries Development Project is one such example. Given that bamboo production has already become a part of the world's new "green economy,"¹ the significance of bamboo as an ecological, industrial and cultural resource,

and the fact that bamboo handicrafts remain an important traditional industry in Taiwan, we have recently been working in Ecuador to develop the country's requirements for bamboo production. In 2013, we sent experts to conduct a survey of bamboo resources in Santa Elena Province, helping to gain an understanding of the distribution of *Guadua*, an American genus of bamboo, and potential yields, as well as to offer localized training for bamboo researchers. This yielded a report surveying bamboo forest resources and analyzing operations such as the transportation of bamboo materials, providing the provincial government a resource for management, planning and decision-making, so as to raise the efficiency of bamboo-related operations, and to develop the infrastructure associated with the bamboo industry.

Another example is our Renewable Energy Policy Consultant-dispatching Project in St. Kitts and Nevis. The project, which is being carried out in response to energy shortages, is seeking to develop the country's solar energy demand as part of an integrated approach to green energy and environmental sustainability. We dispatched an expert in solar energy to St. Kitts and Nevis in 2013 to assist in the development of renewable

energy policies and regulations, and associated operations. The expert also organized a seminar on renewable energy, bringing together the points of view and opinions of both the public and private sectors involved in developing renewable energy. This built consensus and strengthened ideas concerning renewable energy among government officials and the public. The expert also assisted in planning training curricula, building technical capacity among personnel involved in power generation. All of these activities have contributed to the development of solar power generation in St. Kitts and Nevis.

We have also provided Hope of Life International, an NGO, with technical assistance as part of preparations for a Tilapia Feed Mill Investment Project in Guatemala. This has provided the organization with the capacity to engage in business planning activities, thereby facilitating the subsequent promotion of associated project work.

■ Public Health and Medical Projects: Focusing on Capacity Building

Four of the UN's MDGs are related to health issues, and it is these goals that provide the direction for the public health and medical projects we carry out in our partner countries. Specifically, our operations and their implementation revolve around four main approaches: permanent medical missions, our Medical Project in Pacific Island Countries, our Healthcare Personnel Training Program and our Used Medical Equipment Donation and Training Project.

Permanent medical missions can be traced back to 1962, when Taiwan dispatched its first mission to Libya. Subsequently, long-term missions have also been stationed in Niger, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, São Tomé and Príncipe, Malawi, Swaziland and other countries.

Assistance provided through permanent medical missions is designed to supply partners with high-quality medical services and raise local medical standards for the benefit of local citizens. In 2013, a team of four was dispatched to Burkina Faso where they implemented a range of services from the Taiwan Medical Mission in Burkina Faso, including clinical treatment and services, mobile consultations, public health promotion, midwife

¹A green economy emphasizes three basic elements of production: market orientation, taking traditional industries as a basis, and reconciliation and harmony between the environment and economic growth.



The implementation of our Burkina Faso Bagré Technical Assistance Project has assisted Burkina Faso to carry out essential maintenance work to irrigation channels in Bagré.

training, medical administration training and medical engineering work, in district hospitals nationwide.

In a typical year we would expect a permanent medical mission to treat or consult at least 14,000 cases. In terms of results in 2013, this medical mission treated and consulted over 17,000 cases, which was very much welcomed by the local government and Burkinabé citizens.

In addition to permanent medical missions, since 2006 we have also dispatched mobile mission to partner countries in the Pacific, each providing two to three weeks of intensive medical services, education and training. Toward the end of 2013, nearly 1,000 medical personnel from 36 Taiwanese hospitals have visited Pacific island countries, providing medical personnel in the region with clinical education and training, and promoting public health education. A total of 150,000 people have benefitted from the project over the years.

Capacity building is also one of the TaiwanICDF's most important operations. The purpose of our Healthcare Personnel Training Program is to raise the skills of medical personnel

from our partner countries. As part of the program, we invite medical personnel to visit Taiwan and build professional capacity through two to three months of training and experience-sharing, as well as by transferring cutting-edge clinical skills. This effectively enhances participants' expertise.

However, despite improvements to medical software, many of our partner countries still lack capacity in terms of high-quality medical hardware, equipment and facilities. Our Used Medical Equipment Donation and Training Project is designed to address this issue based on the current state of the medical environment in partner countries. On receiving a list from partners of the medical equipment they need, we work with Taiwan's GMISS program to seek out and service used medical equipment, extending its life and effectively putting its proper functions to good use.

From 2011 to 2012, the project managed to acquire four CT scanners, worth approximately NT\$60 million, for donation to Burkina Faso. At the same time we also organized installation and training courses, enhancing partners' skills in terms of repair, maintenance and operation in the long term.

Interview—Edwin Aragon, Executive Director, OIRSA:

Taiwan's Disease Prevention and Control Techniques Improving Farmers' Livelihoods



OIRSA Project Director Mrs. Gisela and Professor Hung Ting-hsuan of National Taiwan University jointly inspect a tree infected by citrus greening disease as part of discussions into integrated pest management.

Taiwan's efforts in developing agricultural techniques and associated achievements are well known throughout the world. Given the spread of the citrus disease HLB, which has been threatening the citrus processing industry and private producers in Central American and Caribbean countries over the past four years, our government has begun passing on techniques focusing on HLB prevention and cure via cooperation between the TaiwanICDF and the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA). This is not only helping to eradicate the disease as effectively as possible, but also helping to forge successful alliances.

We spoke with Guillermo Alvarado and Edwin Aragon, the OIRSA's former and current executive directors to understand their involvement in our Strengthening the Control of Huanglongbing (HLB) and the Implementation of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Citrus Project, and to get their thoughts on cooperating with the TaiwanICDF.

Passing on Taiwan's Successful Experiences, Nurturing Capacity for Ownership

The former CEO of the OIRSA, Mr. Alvarado, who signed the project's cooperation agreement with the TaiwanICDF on the organization's behalf and who has been deeply involved with the projects, says that Taiwan has been a reliable cooperation partner in Central America for many years, citing as examples Taiwan's key role in successfully modernizing laws and regulations governing sanitation within the region's poultry industry, in preventing and controlling classical swine fever, and in developing the potential of hydroponic cultivation methods.

Mr. Alvarado recalls how the OIRSA has been working in close cooperation with Taiwan since the 1980s. He says that in terms of preventing and controlling HLB, his organization had been looking to understand Taiwan's abundant experience, and, having taken the initiative to seek help, received immediate feedback and subsequent assistance.



Guillermo Alvarado, former executive director of the OIRSA.



Edwin Aragon, executive director of the OIRSA, meeting TaiwanICDF Secretary General Tao Wen-lung.

He says that in addition to funding, the assistance provided by the Taiwanese government via the TaiwanICDF means they're receiving practical know-how that can't be provided by anywhere else in the world. This is allowing the OIRSA to gain autonomy and take control of the situation.

Before the TaiwanICDF began providing Taiwan's experience, the OIRSA's related experience had mostly come from the United States and Brazil. Due to the vast size of planting zones, experiences of prevention and control in these two countries have focused on an area-wide approach, using rocky borderlines to segregate certain areas. Even so, the Asian citrus psyllid and infection in citrus have continued to spread.

By contrast, planting areas in Taiwan are much smaller and dotted about a wide landscape, which is very similar to the style of planting practiced by Central American producers. Furthermore, Taiwan has developed comprehensive disease diagnostics and management techniques, including many treatments and procedures not yet understood in other parts of the world, so the introduction of Taiwanese prevention and control measures into Central America has been a real shot in the arm.

Mr. Aragon explains further that to control HLB effectively, the OIRSA has adopted a number of superior, innovative concepts from Taiwan, including moving toward the establishment of healthy nursery plant and epidemic prevention systems, and professional training on production and management systems. The hope is to protect the safety of agricultural production and to increase agricultural trade values.

Finally, Mr. Aragon stresses that the past experiences with prevention and control coming from Taiwan proves that the presence of HLB doesn't need to spell the end for the citrus industry, and that it's quite possible to preserve the industry – and even for it to develop and to flourish – by adopting the right approach. He's very grateful to the TaiwanICDF for the advanced concepts the organization has brought to the region, and for the sense of hope this has engendered. Under the TaiwanICDF's guidance and assistance, he says he believes it is possible to effectively integrate the resources and strengths of Central American governments, citrus producers and the OIRSA, thereby avoiding significant economic losses and improving the well-being of farmers and the poor.

Lending and Investment



In 2013, our lending and investment operations focused on exploring projects based on agricultural and environmental protection themes. We actively sought to develop a number of environmental protection projects, including a waste recycling investment project and a renewable energy project, as well as associated projects relating to climate change, agriculture and ICT.

To raise project effectiveness, these operations and themes follow the processes set out in the project cycle, promoting a medium-term plan of work, including preparation and appraisal. We have also been focusing on the TaiwanICDF's priority development themes and talking to a number of international organizations about potential cooperation projects. In terms of lending operations, we have adjusted interest rates consistent with trends throughout the global economy, maintaining flexibility in reflection of interest rates in international markets. In terms of investments activities, we have strengthened private sector participation, including by inviting groups of Taiwanese investors to take part in fieldwork and conduct joint missions in Burkina Faso, Guatemala and Myanmar, jointly seeking business opportunities so that we can leverage the effects of funding and expand the scope of investment projects.

To ensure that our development projects are funded well enough to proceed smoothly, we provide supplementary funding to technical assistance projects, establishing or strengthening the capacity of a partner country or implementing agency to carry out their work.

Our program to combat coffee rust in cooperation with other international organizations in Central America is one such example. To assist our Central American partner countries

in reducing the impact of coffee rust, we've not only planned a lending project, but are also providing partners with technical consulting services. We also organized a joint conference with other international organizations in Central America, which provided an opportunity to research and analyze problems and requirements that stakeholders from various countries have regarding the production chain.

Our Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project is another example. After understanding the project requirements proposed by the Belizean government, we arranged for the relevant stakeholders to take part in associated workshops. Furthermore, arranging technical assistance by sending Taiwanese experts to Belize to provide guidance on the sidelines meant the executing agency could plan how to implement project content and provide timely feedback after receiving funding.

We are also addressing today's trends and issues by raising initiatives through international organizations' cooperative frameworks, and then building regional frameworks and approaches to implementation. We are responding to coffee rust through a regional initiative involving financial and technical support, promoting sustainable power generation and electrification in the Pacific and Central America, and echoing sustainable resource cooperation frameworks in Central and Eastern Europe.

To ensure projects are implemented smoothly, in 2013 we continued to supervise progress via fieldwork and written reports according to schedule. We monitored and reviewed the progress of implementation or that of executing agencies, adjusting or correcting project content and loan agreements in accordance with monitoring results and the actual requirements suggested by development partners.

As of December 31, 2013, the TaiwanICDF was committed to 83 lending projects, for which commitments amounted to approximately US\$650 million. We were also committed to 13 investment projects, for which commitments amounted to approximately US\$100 million. In 2013, we also dispatched identification, preparation, appraisal, supervision, completion missions or participated in joint missions or meetings with international organizations on 29 occasions, and signed four project MOUs.

Interview—Government Officers, Belize:

TaiwanICDF Nurturing Valuable Cultural Potential, Bringing Economic Development to Belize City

In Belize, the government has made the development of the country's tourism sector a key priority over recent years. Unfortunately, not many of the tourists arriving at Belize City aboard cruise ships have been willing to explore the city's old downtown area, but now the government hopes to attract more visitors through the restoration of Government House, also referred to as the "House of Culture" and a key landmark from the country's British colonial era.

We've been working with Belizean authorities on their Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project since 2011, improving the feasibility of the program and raising institutional capacity through capacity building. At the same time we are also ready to commit to providing a loan.

Christy Mastry and Abil Castañeda, two government officials from Belize's Ministry of Tourism and Culture who have key roles in the project, were in Taiwan in July 2013 to attend the TaiwanICDF's Workshop on Policy and Practice in the Tourism Industry. We talked to them about working with Taiwan and how they saw tourism development progressing in Belize.

Creating an Eco-museum in Downtown Belize City

Back in 2011, the TaiwanICDF took a team of consultants on a site visit to Belize City's downtown area. The consultants picked out a number of heritage buildings with the greatest potential for development, and, through workshops and lectures, introduced the concept of an "eco-museum," while also assisting local government officers and community members to develop an oral history that tells the story of the area's colonial past. These kinds of components are designed to engage the community, support local employment and rejuvenate the area at grassroots level.

Abil recalls that the introduction of the eco-museum concept was a breakthrough for him and other government officials. He explains that it's about taking the museum concept of having displays, within a building, and shifting things outside into the urban landscape, together with special buildings, cultural activities and unique, beautiful scenery, and using all of those assets to create a museum plot that tells an area's story within that landscape. So the local community has been involved in the planning and design of the project, and the hope is that everybody



While visiting Taiwan to attend a workshop on Taiwan's tourism development and experiences, Christy Mastry (third from left) and Abil Castañeda (fourth from left), government officers from Belize's Ministry of Tourism and Culture, also took part in additional activities arranged by the TaiwanICDF, including a tour of Taipei's historic Dihua Street.

can help to create an eco-museum in downtown Belize City.

"It was through the technical assistance from the TaiwanICDF ... that we realized that this project can be much more," he adds. "It can really become a catalyst for community development, for the economic revitalization of the downtown and the overall enhancement of the downtown of Belize City."

Christy agrees: "If we were to do just the original concept of this, the idea was to enhance [the House of Culture]. But would it have really brought anyone else, and especially the community, into the value chain? Not really. So, the luxury of taking the time to really consult and get the community on board is, in the long run, what's really going to hold it all together."

The project is a pilot scheme, so the selection of buildings to be renovated represents only a few of the hundreds that could potentially be developed further down the line. In terms of further developments and urban renewal in the future, there's still a long way to go, but Christy is clear that things are already looking much brighter.

"That's why this project is really key," she says. "Because it's merging the actual physical environment of Belize City, as well as kind of bringing back the cultural story. So that's become really important. It really is the promotion of a cultural product, the enhancement of Belize City, through the TaiwanICDF."

International Human Resources



International Workshops

The purpose of TaiwanICDF international workshops is to assist developing partner countries in developing human resources and share Taiwan's successful development experience and comparative advantages. We adjust the themes of our workshops every year, which ensures that participants receive the most effective learning experience possible by following international trends and our partners' needs.

In accordance with partners' needs and national planning for the development of Taiwan's comparative advantages, we held 19 workshops in 2013, attended by 383 officials from 55 countries.

Of these, 18 workshops were held within Taiwan, including: a Workshop on Tissue Culture Techniques and Healthy Seedling Propagation; a Workshop on the Promotion of One Town, One Product Projects; a Workshop on the Project Cycle—Design and Monitoring Framework; a Workshop on Biodiversity and the Germplasm

Conservation of Plant Resources; a Workshop on Policy Frameworks for Photovoltaic Development; a Workshop on Policy and Practice in the Tourism Industry; a Workshop on Women's Micro-sized Enterprise Start-up and Credit Facilities; a Workshop on Agricultural Marketing; a Workshop on Economic Planning and Policy Development; and a Workshop on Public Health Policy.

To meet the needs of partners from Latin America, we also organized a number of Spanish-language workshops, including: a Workshop on Agricultural Marketing; a Workshop on Tissue Culture Techniques and Healthy Seedling Propagation; a Workshop on HLB Prevention in Citrus Technologies; a Workshop on Tilapia Culture; a Workshop on Policy and Practice in the Tourism Industry; a Workshop on the Project Cycle—Design and Monitoring Framework; and a Workshop on the Promotion of One Town, One Product Projects.

The 19th workshop, a French-language Workshop on Microenterprise Creation and Microcredit, was held in Burkina Faso in response

to the needs of a specific bilateral cooperation project.

The distribution of workshops held during 2013 by sector and number of participants was as follows: health care, one class of 23 participants (5%); the environment, two classes for a total of 40 participants (10%); social development, two classes for a total of 39 participants (11%); trade and economics, five classes for a total of 116 participants (26%); agriculture and aquaculture, seven classes for a total of 116 participants (37%); and management, two classes for a total of 49 participants (11%).

Our workshops are planned according to the training needs and objectives of our target beneficiaries, and are classified by subject matter, form and beneficiary. The program mainly comprises project-based workshops designed to promote and upgrade capacity in our bilateral cooperation projects. These are supplemented by policy-based workshops designed to introduce and share Taiwan's experiences and comparative advantages. Content is planned on an annual basis, and we also make use of seminars and short-, medium- and long-term training placements. We invite participants from a wide range of backgrounds to take part in our training programs.

This means, for example, inviting officials working at a policy-making level to exchange experiences in seminars and short-term workshops, offering training to seed trainers who can strengthen project promotion and disseminate knowledge, offering series of graded short-, medium- and long-term workshops over a longer period to assist partner countries to tackle specific technical issues, and inviting technicians to take part in medium-term workshops and placements so that the training we provide is more pragmatic and timely and better focused on beneficiaries and content. All of these measures are helping to achieve the objectives of building capacity and managing projects sustainably.

International Higher Education Scholarship Program

The TaiwanICDF's International Higher Education Scholarship Program was initiated in 1998 to support the increasing demand for highly skilled human resources in our partner countries. As part of the program, students from partner countries receive a full scholarship to study in Taiwan. All courses are taught in English.

The program was originally restricted to a smaller number of graduate and postgraduate programs, but was expanded considerably in 2006 when undergraduate courses were offered for the first time. The range of subjects on offer continues to increase and diversify each year. As of the end of 2013, the TaiwanICDF was cooperating with 20 universities, offering 30 undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate degree programs over a wide range of academic disciplines such as agriculture, social sciences and the humanities, business administration, public health and medicine, and engineering.

At this time, 437 students from 35 countries were studying in Taiwan, of whom 204 were newly enrolled at the start of the academic year in September 2013. The number of students enrolled by subject was as follows: agriculture, 69 students (16%); engineering, 114 students (26%); business administration, 118 students (27%); social sciences and the humanities, 44 students (10%); and public health and medicine, 92 students (21%).

Some 1,157 students have received scholarships as part of the implementation of

Figure 3

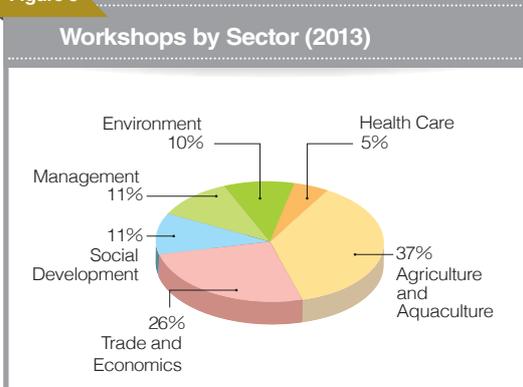
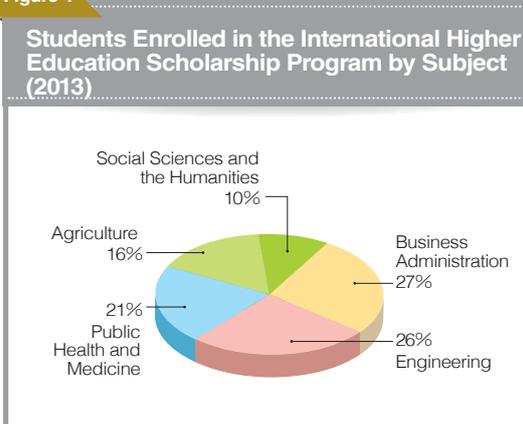


Figure 4



the program to date. To deepen and widen human resources with respect to development effectiveness in our partner countries, we are integrating our own core assistance themes with partner countries' development needs, continuing to introduce new courses that have enhanced the effectiveness of the program. In 2013, we made two new courses available through the program: the Master of Educational Leadership and Management Development at National Chung Cheng University, and I-Shou University's Postgraduate Medicine Program. These two courses will bring further assistance to our partner countries by cultivating educational leadership and nurturing professionals in the field of medicine.

Education is one of the TaiwanICDF's core areas, and so promoting assistance projects involving education is a priority. The objective is to assist partners in building human capital, in improving the self-sufficiency of citizens through knowledge and skills, and in harnessing their expertise for national development.

With higher education representing the apex of any country's education system, the Master of Educational Leadership and Management Development introduced in 2013 will develop a group of education officials and school administrators in our partner countries, so that talented educational leaders and managers can be found throughout multiple nations in the future. Furthermore, by promoting the development of educational administration and school management systems, and by improving education systems, the course will indirectly improve the quality of basic education in

elementary and secondary schools, developing partners' human resources more profoundly.

Furthermore, to respond to international trends in medicine and share Taiwan's educational resources and experience in the field, as well as respond to our partners' needs to cultivate medical human resources, 2013 saw us introduce I-Shou University's Postgraduate Medicine Program into our scholarship program. The purpose of this course is to draw on Taiwan's resources in higher medical education, helping partner countries overcome their lack of medical resources by developing general practitioners.

In the future, the program will seek to put the core concepts of development assistance into practice and expand impact, incorporating our own core development themes and partners' national development strategies. In terms of medium- to long-term planning, we currently expect outstanding young students from partner countries to take the initiative to apply to study in Taiwan, and we will gradually promote a bilateral cooperation framework for the scholarship program, providing more scholarships to those already engaged in providing public services. On returning home, such recipients will be able to engage in policy planning, establish systems and promote operations that make a practical contribution toward the economic and social development of their country.

In addition to our work in higher education, we continued to support education for vulnerable children in 2013 through the TaiwanICDF Scholarship Program in Burkina Faso, which was implemented in cooperation with UNICEF and Terres des Hommes. More than 2,000 primary

Table 1

TaiwanICDF Alumni Society (2013)

Region	Country
Africa	The Gambia, Ivory Coast, South Africa, Swaziland
Asia-Pacific	Fiji, Kiribati, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tuvalu, Vietnam (Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City)
Caribbean	Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Central America	Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama
Eastern Europe	Hungary, Latvia, Poland
Middle East, Central Europe and Central Asia	Oman, Russia
South America	Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru
Total 33 countries, 34 chapters	

and secondary school children benefited from the program in the past year.

TaiwanICDF Alumni Society

The TaiwanICDF offers annual funding toward the establishment and operation of chapters of the TaiwanICDF Alumni Society. This program supports the activities of former workshop participants and scholarship students, strengthening interaction with alumni and enlarging the role they play in cooperation and development activities. The program also helps maintain cordial relations between Taiwan and its allies. At present, 34 chapters of the society are in service in 33 countries.

Healthcare Personnel Training Program

Our Healthcare Personnel Training Program

is carried out according to annual training needs identified by Taiwanese embassies and representative offices, and in line with our own medical cooperation projects. To refine the program so that it better meets the needs of medical personnel in our partner countries, we have encouraged flexibility by customizing program management. When participants return home they continue to make the most of their training as seed teachers, passing on all of the professional know-how, skills and experience that they learned to local medical personnel, benefitting an even wider range of people.

In 2013, we worked with seven Taiwanese institutions in bringing 32 medical personnel from seven partner countries to Taiwan. This included five doctors, 10 nurses, four midwives, nine medical engineers, one radiologist, one dietician, one medical examiner and one dental model manufacturing technician.

Table 2

Healthcare Personnel Training Program (2013)

Region	Country	Host Institution	Trainee Occupation	Training Subject	Participants
Asia-Pacific	Kiribati	Mackay Memorial Hospital	Nurse	Nursing	1
			Radiologist	Radiology	1
	Palau	Shin Kong Wu Ho-Su Memorial Hospital	Nurse	Nursing	2
	Solomon Islands	Kaohsiung Medical University Chung-Ho Memorial Hospital	Doctor	Pediatrics	1
				Radiology	1
			Nurse	Orthopedics	1
	Tuvalu	Chung Shan Medical University Hospital	Nurse	Nursing	1
			Dental model manufacturing technician	Dentistry	1
	Fiji	Mackay Memorial Hospital	Doctor	Internal medicine	1
			Nurse	Nursing	1
			Dietician	Dietetics	1
	Papua New Guinea	Changhua Christian Hospital	Doctor	Surgery	1
			Anesthesiology	1	
Examiner			Pathology	1	
Africa	Burkina Faso	Fooyin University	Nurse	Medical administration	4
			Midwife	Midwifery	4
		E-Da Hospital	Medical engineer	Medical engineering	9

Interview—Diogenes Castillo Berroa, Scholarship Recipient:

Ready to Introduce Taiwan's Aquaculture Know-how To the Dominican Republic



Following two years at NTOU, Diogenes Castillo Berroa believes he's gained a lot of new and useful know-how. Most of his efforts have focused on his own specialization in shrimp production.

The aim of the TaiwanICDF's International Higher Education Scholarship Program is to assist partner countries in fostering talent in terms of strategic planning, technical know-how and management. Returning home, graduates can use what they've learned to promote their country's socio-economic development, and assist in our projects.

Diogenes Castillo Berroa, a native of the Dominican Republic who finished a two-year stint on the National Taiwan Ocean University's (NTOU) International Master's Program in Marine Sciences and Resource Management this summer, is a case in point.

Assisting the Development of the Aquaculture Sector, Playing a Bridging Role in Cooperation

A graduate of the Universidad ISA in Santiago de los Caballeros, the Dominican Republic's second city, 33-year-old Diogenes came to Taiwan on one of our scholarships having spent the past seven years working for the Dominican Institute of Agriculture and Forestry Research (IDIAF), where he was researching ways to contribute toward the nation's food security by raising the competitiveness of Dominican fish farmers.

After researching the current state of the Dominican Republic's aquaculture, Diogenes explains that there is much room for improvement in the country's aquaculture sector. The cost of imported fish feed is high, as is the cost of the fuel used for fishing and shipping. This means that local fish farmers struggle to increase production, and the huge demand for produce from a growing market is passing them by.

However, with no degree-length courses on aquaculture available at Dominican universities, the IDIAF tends to lack the expertise needed to resolve this and other issues. Diogenes says he first heard

about NTOU's graduate program in aquaculture and the TaiwanICDF-sponsored scholarship from TaiwanICDF technicians based at the Taiwan Technical Mission in the Dominican Republic. Eager to pursue his research, he soon applied to the organization and was shortly on his way to Taiwan, even though it meant saying goodbye his wife and two daughters for a time.

Two years later, Diogenes believes he's gained a lot of new and useful know-how from NTOU, especially regarding the production of a range of commercially valuable species such as grouper and tilapia.

But mainly, he says, he came with a research plan already in mind, and focused most of his efforts on his own specialization in shrimp production, and especially the production of high-quality shrimp feed.

During this period of study in Taiwan, the lab at NTOU has become Diogenes' second home. He's spent much of his time conducting the experiment he had previously wanted to do, but which had been all but impossible due to a lack of equipment at home. Creating a new shrimp feed meant analyzing protein and carbohydrate compositions, and comparing the benefits in terms of energy intake, and Diogenes explains that Taiwan has the equipment and machinery to do that, whereas the Dominican Republic doesn't have that facility at present.

Now into 2013, having completed his course and about to return home Diogenes is full of ideas and can't wait to share them with his colleagues. He has already prepared a series of plans and he says the first thing will be to meet with the IDIAF team and create a project involving nutrition, adapting the feed and plant-based additives he has developed to local conditions.

When the conversation shifts to the future of aquaculture in the Dominican Republic, Diogenes is optimistic; he thinks the sector is ready to take off. He says that the professional expertise he'll be taking back from Taiwan will not only assist in developing the sector further, but also allow him to play a bridging role between the TaiwanICDF and the IDIAF, introducing still more Taiwanese know-how, and driving academic and technical exchange between the two countries.

And finally, if colleagues ask him whether they should come to Taiwan and study on this course, would he recommend it?

"Definitely, I wouldn't think twice," he replies, breaking into a wide grin. "Definitely, I would say, 'Just prepare your luggage and go.'"

Interview—Fijian Participants, Healthcare Personnel Training Program:

What We've Learned Will Improve Quality of Care in Fiji

At the end of August 2013, Elenoa Waqatakirewa and Josephine Tuliga, two health care professionals from Fiji, had just completed the TaiwanICDF's nine-week Healthcare Personnel Training Program and were about to return home.

Back home, Elenoa is a dietician based at the Diabetic Hub at the hospital in Lautoka, a city on the west coast of Viti Levu, Fiji's biggest island. Josephine is a nurse based in Labasa, the largest town on Vanua Levu, Fiji's second island. Since they're specialized in different areas of health care, the TaiwanICDF's program managers and medics at Mackay Memorial Hospital developed separate curricula weighted toward Elenoa and Josephine's individual areas of expertise.

Before they returned home, we asked them to tell us about their training experience in Taiwan.

Deepening Existing Knowledge and Skills Through Experience-sharing

As the only dietician visiting Mackay Memorial Hospital this summer, Elenoa was assigned her own mentor, the supervisor of the dietetics department at the hospital's Taipei branch. Her curriculum involved workshops, presentations and ward rounds; and experience-sharing with other dieticians and health professionals.

While she was in Taiwan, Josephine also found out that she would be transferring to the Diabetic Hub in Labasa upon returning to Fiji, so her mentor arranged some additional training for her, enabling her to understand the latest treatments and facilities for diabetes in Taiwan. Josephine was assigned to follow the same curriculum as a nurse from Kiribati, and together they made their way through the units and wards at the hospital's three branches, attending observations, lectures and presentations, as well as taking part in a week-long assignment at a community health center.

Coming to Taiwan to work in a real-life health care environment, participants with the Healthcare Personnel Training Program must already be qualified and experienced – and Josephine and Elenoa are indeed just that, each having been qualified and working for over a decade. They explain that they're not novice trainees here to gain entirely new knowledge and skills; instead, they were both nominated for the program by their managers back home, coming here to deepen their existing knowledge and skills through experience-sharing.

Josephine, for example, explains that although



Elenoa Waqatakirewa (left) and Josephine Tuliga (right) discuss their experience of clinical training in Taiwan. In addition to praising Taiwan's medical environment, they also say that their experience has strengthened their resolve for further professional study.

she has previously worked out of a “very small” community health center, and the hospital in her district is also quite small, the level of care and service they're able to provide to patients is not so different to what she's seen here in Taipei. The main difference, she says, is the equipment, which in Taiwan is more advanced than in Fiji.

Elenoa paints a similar picture, saying that for her it's perhaps been the scale of operations at Mackay Memorial Hospital that have left the biggest impression.

“We have the same number of dieticians back home, but we only look after three hundred-plus beds,” she explains. “Here, there's more than a thousand beds with just the same number of dieticians. I've learned a lot from the skills of these dieticians, how they manage their time well.”

For Elenoa, the overall experience of really being immersed in another country's health care system has had the single biggest impact.

“It's just a different experience,” she explains. “It has boosted my morale, and there's also a lot of things that I can go back and teach my patients, how [Taiwanese] health personnel address their patients, their visits, how well they're organized. These are some of the things I can go back and apply regarding nutrition and education in the diabetic center.”

Josephine agrees that her participation will improve the quality of medical care in Fiji: “I know there's a lot of things we'll be taking back through the TaiwanICDF, to apply to our work areas.”

“Whatever we've seen, it'll never go out of our system,” she says. “It'll always be there, and I know it's all come about because of the TaiwanICDF.”

Humanitarian Assistance



One of the primary functions of the TaiwanICDF is to provide emergency aid to nations and peoples affected by natural disasters, epidemics, terrorism or conflict.

In providing the essential items needed for human survival, international humanitarian assistance comprises three major phases: emergency aid in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or crisis, reconstruction after the initial emergency has passed, and assistance to support long-term local development. In line with this approach, our current humanitarian assistance operations have tended to focus on the second phase by supporting reconstruction projects.

In addition, we also observe the Sphere Project, initiated by numerous NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and have adopted its Humanitarian Charter as our framework. The charter defines humanitarian assistance in terms of four minimum standards: water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security and nutrition; shelter, settlement and non-food items; and health action. This assists survivors by restoring their original standard of living as quickly as possible.

In terms of supporting water supplies,

during 2013 we promoted two projects in Haiti, Emergency Cholera Prevention and Response for Vulnerable Households Affected by Hurricane Sandy, and the New Hope Village Water Supply System Project, a sub-project of the Haiti New Hope Village Residents Resettlement Project—Phase II.

After Hurricane Sandy struck Haiti at the end of October 2012, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs issued notice that nearly 7,000 houses had been destroyed, leaving more than 30,000 people homeless.

Cases of cholera infection began to rise sharply following the hurricane, and with local public health in a critical state, the spread of the disease led to rising numbers of deaths. In response to this emergency, we contacted the Taiwanese embassy in Haiti to understand local humanitarian needs. We were then approached by World Vision Haiti through the embassy, to suggest that we carry out the project together. After we offered funding of US\$99,995 to match World Vision Haiti's US\$100,000, the six-month project began in February 2013, aiming to provide assistance in disaster-hit areas.

Assistance included setting up water stations and handing out water purification



Through its humanitarian assistance operations, the TaiwanICDF has been assisting in Haiti's post-disaster recovery following the recent major earthquake. Shown here, engineering work for the construction of a weir as part of the New Hope Village Water Supply System Project.

tablets, electrolytes and other medical supplies. Public health promotions were also carried out, controlling local outbreaks of cholera and, through dual prevention and treatment measures, fighting the epidemic among 220,000 victims in and around Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Bouquets and Gonve.

A joint initiative between the TaiwanICDF and the Red Cross Society of the Republic of China (Taiwan), implemented as part of the Haiti New Hope Village Residents Resettlement Project—Phase II, the New Hope Village Water Supply System Project continues the construction of water supply systems. Combining US\$332,880 from the TaiwanICDF and US\$649,280 from the Red Cross Society of the Republic of China (Taiwan), it is projected that the plan will provide enough water to support the livelihoods of 200 households in New Hope Village, as well as a school and a health center, together with ample irrigation water to support the reclamation of farmland on 50 hectares alongside the village. This will allow residents to save time which would otherwise be spent collecting water from a nearby river, and enhance public health and agricultural production.

In terms of food security, we have also worked in Abyei, a contested area on the border between South Sudan and Sudan whose sovereignty still remains uncertain. In 2011, refugees began to make their way across the border following South Sudan's formal

independence. After arriving in the area, they had nothing to their name; they lacked equipment and skills needed to produce their own food, and were dependent on international food aid to survive.

To improve local food security, in 2013 we cooperated with Mercy Corps to implement a project in South Sudan, Food Security Assistance for IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities in the Abyei Area. In addition to providing the agricultural materials needed to produce food, as part of this six-month, US\$500,000-project we also dispatched two short-term professional volunteers specializing in horticulture and capacity building to assist Mercy Corps in implementing the project. This included assistance in training agricultural extension officers, as well as training for personnel from local government units, with the expectation of building basic capacity in food production by the completion of the project, and ultimately reducing dependence on international food aid.

Sparing no effort in our promotion of humanitarian assistance, we are not only addressing some of the world's most significant disasters, but also playing an active role as a provider of humanitarian assistance. Continuing to expand international participation through the spirit of humanitarian concern, we will promote the principles of international friendship among the international community, thereby building sustainable development partnerships.

Interview—Judith Lumu, Director, Mercy Corps Agok Office, South Sudan:

Taiwan's Professional Support Improving Food Security In South Sudan



Judith Lumu and TaiwanICDF volunteers outside Mercy Corps' office in South Sudan.

Shortly after South Sudan became an independent nation in 2011, we cooperated with Mercy Corps to implement our Supports to IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities Project, assisting 357 farming households in improving local food production. To widen Taiwan's participation in east Africa, this year we continued to work with Mercy Corps, implementing a Food Security Assistance for IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities Project in Abyei, an area on the South Sudanese side of the border between Sudan and South Sudan.

In order to understand Mercy Corps' views and their expectations in working with the TaiwanICDF, we talked to Judith Lumu, the director of Mercy Corps' office in Agok, Abyei, and our primary partner involved in running this food security project.

Judith, a Ugandan national, is a seasoned development specialist, having previously served with the UN's World Food Programme for nine years. She has been working in South Sudan since March 2013, and is now supervising two TaiwanICDF volunteers and a number of local people as part of the project's working group.

Building Local Capacity in Food Production through Project-based Assistance

Judith is optimistic about the situation in South Sudan. Despite this being a border region, it would seem that conflict in the area has come to a halt. The situation with the local community has stabilized and things are calm, she says. There has also been plenty of rain. Forecasts suggest that harvests could be good this year, bringing temporary respite to alleviate a food crisis.

However, although the area in and around Agok has fertile soil and an adequate water supply, and is an area with great potential for agricultural production, Judith points out that it's not only refugees that lack the capacity to produce food, but also local agricultural officers who need assistance to build capacity.

Therefore, Judith thinks the arrival of two specialist volunteers from Taiwan is no small thing, and hopes to build basic food production capacity throughout the area through their assistance. Furthermore, she says, this exchange of personnel will not only allow Taiwanese volunteers to learn about Mercy Corps' practices, but more importantly, she hopes the volunteers will be able to pass on their own professional skills.

As for South Sudan's long-term development, Judith has high hopes that one day, Abyei's returnees and refugees will be self-sufficient in food production, and will be able to live and work peacefully. She's very clear that if Taiwan can continue to provide professional support, assisting in raising overall capacity at a local level, then this will be a great help in increasing the degree of local food security.

Finally, Judith expresses her gratitude for all the assistance provided by Taiwan on behalf of Mercy Corps and local beneficiaries. She hopes that cooperation can continue to deepen and suggests that in time, the TaiwanICDF could establish a base in the area, working alongside Mercy Corps to contribute to development efforts in Abyei.

We repatriated our volunteers in mid-December for safety reasons following the outbreak of conflict in and around Juba, South Sudan's capital city. Their redeployment to South Sudan will depend on how the situation develops.

Overseas Volunteers



Some 592 volunteers have provided either development or humanitarian assistance in 36 countries as part of the TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers Service since its inception in 1996.

In 2013 we dispatched 30 long- and short-term volunteers to serve in 11 partner countries: Panama, El Salvador, Nicaragua, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Thailand, the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Palau and South Sudan.

As well as playing their role in development assistance work, our volunteers become deeply immersed in our partner countries' societies, building meaningful relationships with local people and working closely with their counterparts to implement projects. This was certainly the case in St. Lucia, for example, where volunteer Deng Ya-lan oversaw an exercise workshop and weight loss competition in Micoud and Dennery organized by the Taiwanese embassy, while volunteer Jian Hui-yan managed a project based around "lifestyles of health and sustainability." The activities of these two volunteers show how our volunteers actively integrate into their local communities and make the most of interaction to

forge win-win opportunities.

Our volunteers also engage in direct discussions to ascertain the needs of the government sector, and are actively involved in thematic analysis, policy development and similar operations, and also bring together those involved in advocacy work. In St. Lucia, for example, volunteer Ye Xiao-qun handled a project designed to build capacity through a retail price survey of key agricultural produce, as well as a project to promote sales of kale. Meanwhile, in São Tomé and Príncipe, Xiao Mei-wen cooperated with partners in the São Tomean tourist sector to expand tourism based on the country's traditional culture.

To enhance the effectiveness of volunteer operations and improve the management of our services, we employ full-time volunteer coordinators whose responsibilities include exploring and planning for the needs of our overseas missions, getting the most out of our professional volunteer projects, and assisting volunteers in resolving issues and interacting with the TaiwanICDF. Having previously posted



Ye Xiao-qun, a volunteer marketing specialist, is keen to pass on new ideas and concepts as part of an agricultural product promotional event organized by the St. Lucian Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries & Rural Development.

coordinators to St. Lucia and Panama, in 2013 we dispatched an additional coordinator to work out of Nicaragua.

In St. Lucia, for example, the position entails arranging training for volunteers posted to the island, and assisting them to adapt to their environment as quickly and smoothly as possible. It also involves uniting volunteers and requires creativity: A series of environmental protection activities held in Gros Islet over the Christmas season meant promoting the joy of Christmas in combination with environmental advocacy. To accomplish this, our coordinator called together all of our volunteers for brainstorming, gathering a range of enthusiastic ideas.

In accordance with the United Nations Volunteers' approach toward placing volunteers in projects, in 2013 we also dispatched three short-term volunteers to Kiribati as part of a fact-finding mission for our Nutrition Project, completing more than 800 dietary assessments and conducting a questionnaire.

We also dispatched volunteers as part of our cooperation with Mercy Corps on a humanitarian assistance project, Food Security Assistance for IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities in the Abyei Area in South Sudan. This was the first time we dispatched volunteers to this kind of situation, where they assisted Mercy Corps in selecting local beneficiaries, and in building the capacity

of agricultural units, increasing the diversity of work that the volunteers we dispatch carry out. In addition, we also signed a cooperation agreement with Mercy Corps, the first such agreement we have signed with an international NGO regarding volunteers, which will continue to promote the cultivation of international experience of humanitarian assistance among Taiwanese nationals.

In terms of training for reserve volunteers, to help local people to really understand the work of the long-term volunteers we dispatch, and to cultivate knowledge of international volunteer work, we organized two events in Kaohsiung and Taipei in the second half of 2013. This enabled students and members of the public thinking about volunteering to understand our approach and the meaning of long-term volunteering. In total, 60 people attended these events. Any participants now wishing to become volunteers must first attend training and obtain basic certification, and may go on to become members of our reserve force of volunteers after completing a course and undergoing an interview.

In the second half of 2013 we also held a volunteer recruitment drive on university campuses around Taiwan, calling at National Chengchi University, National Chung Hsing University, National Yang-Ming University, National Tsing Hua University, Chung Shan Medical University, National Sun Yat-Sen University and other educational institutions, where we shared volunteer experiences and presented an exhibition about life overseas. This increased cooperative links between the TaiwanICDF and the nation's universities, spreading our roots more deeply and raising students' interest and understanding of doing overseas voluntary work in the future.

In addition to campus activities, we've also worked with the Youth Volunteer Center – a part of the Youth Development Administration at the Ministry of Education – to organize a volunteer expo, and in addition we also had a booth at the Youth Development Administration's "All in One" volunteer results-sharing event. Through a variety of exchanges with members of society, we are enhancing the visibility of the TaiwanICDF and actively promoting public awareness of the TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers Service.

Interview—Project-based Volunteers, Nutrition Improvement Project, Kiribati: Expertise in Nutrition Leads to Valuable Citizen Diplomacy

The TaiwanICDF has carried out a range of projects to assist in Kiribati's development over the years, as part of which we launched a Nutrition Improvement Project in March 2013. The initiative will address long-term dietary imbalances and the high mortality rates caused by non-communicable diseases by increasing supplies of fruits and vegetables and also by enhancing knowledge, attitudes and behavior among I-Kiribati students and citizens, as well as by improving dietary habits and nutrition.

To ensure the project goes well and to boost participation rates, we sent a group of three volunteers from Fu Jen Catholic University's Department of Nutritional Science to Kiribati in August, to assist in conducting a nutrition questionnaire. This was the first time that volunteers were dispatched to handle a specific case in this way.

Improving Partners' Health through A Community-based Nutrition Survey

To understand more about how this went, we talked to two of these short-term volunteers: research assistant Tsai Shu-mei, and Tai Chu-yun, a master's student. Both joined the mission as volunteers to conduct questionnaires for our project because of their teacher, Tzeng Min-su.

Although Shu-mei and Chu-yun had gathered information online and done more than enough preparatory work before setting out, the pair say that after arriving they encountered enough differences in culture, language and dietary habits to make the implementation of their mission a real baptism of fire.

Shu-mei explains that some of the questionnaire content they originally designed had to be revised in response to local customs and culture. Their food frequency questionnaire, for example, had to be updated to account for popular local foods such as pumpkin leaves and sea worms. Similarly, a "bowl," the standard measurement of volume in Taiwan, had to be changed to "plate," while the sizes of bananas, papayas, melons and other fruits turned out to be very different to varieties available in Taiwan. All in all, they had to make a number of amendments to ensure they were eliciting natural responses.

"You really learn a lot from conducting a nutrition survey within a community," adds Chu-Yun. "You have to go out into the field and try to understand the local culture before you can obtain representative samples and your is accurate."

This means that communicating with I-Kiribati



Volunteer specialist Tsai Shu-mei holds up an explanatory aid, assisting local residents to estimate their food intake and complete a questionnaire correctly as part of a project in Kiribati.

people raised some interesting points, Chu-yun continues. She says that when being asked questions, many participants would only raise an eyebrow or nod, without quite making it clear that they had understood. But, Chu-yun says, you can't assume that they understood, as this kind of response only indicates that they heard you. You can only mark a question as completed when a participant replies "Yes," which demonstrates that he or she really understood.

Over 18 days in Kiribati, and with the help of the local Taiwan Technical Mission, the three women were busy with training local assistants to conduct questionnaires, translating texts and producing props. They also explored local markets to understand the kinds of foods available, and learned the local names for such produce.

When asked what the biggest gain was in taking part in the mission, Chu-yun smiles and says that at first she didn't feel confident when speaking English. But in order to oversee the activities involved in their survey, she just had to pluck up the courage and go for it, she says, adding that "practice makes perfect." And when an audience of schoolchildren has understood the meaning of your survey and can respond, "Suddenly you feel awesome about yourself and it really sparks your confidence."

For her part, Shu-mei thinks that her time on a volunteer mission allowed her to explore and think about what she wants to do in life. Having spent a short 18 days serving, she's now sure that she wants to be involved in developing similar community-based nutrition surveys in the future. Interacting with community residents gives you a first-hand understanding of the state of people's nutrition and your subsequent research findings can really be put to use in improving their dietary habits, she says. That kind of feeling and that kind of impact is something she's sure she'll never get bored of.

Taiwan Youth Overseas Service (Alternative Military Service)

To expand the international perspective of young Taiwanese people, cultivate expertise in the field of overseas assistance, address temporary shortages of overseas professional and technical human resources, and make use of the strengths of military servicemen in the promotion of the nation's diplomatic work, in 1996 MOFA began to explore the feasibility of offering outstanding young Taiwanese the chance to perform alternative forms of military service at Taiwan's overseas technical and medical missions, or on similar projects. This was approved by the Executive Yuan in 2000, leading to the official introduction of the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service in 2001.

MOFA commissions the TaiwanICDF to provide training and management for the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service. To date, 13 groups totaling more than 1,000 servicemen have been dispatched to partner countries, where they have assisted teams at Taiwan's technical and medical missions in implementing a range of assistance projects in agriculture, aquaculture, animal husbandry, trade and economic development, enterprise consultancy, medical services and ICT.

In 2013, we enrolled 85 servicemen into the service, to work in a variety of fields including agronomy and horticulture, aquaculture, animal husbandry and veterinary services, agricultural machinery, agribusiness management and marketing, food processing, economics and trade, ICT, irrigation engineering, Spanish, French, plant protection, pest control, tourism, nutrition, and public health and medicine. After completing an initial, six-week period of training and orientation, military servicemen were dispatched in October 2013, and are now serving on 14 projects and 16 technical and medical missions in 22 partner countries throughout Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

The operations of the Taiwan Medical Mission in São Tomé and Príncipe have been supervised by MOFA since 2011, and the operations of the Taiwan Medical Mission in Swaziland have been supervised by MOFA since 2012. Taiwan's provision of ICT services to Tuvalu also falls under MOFA's remit. From 2013's total of 85 draftees, we therefore allocated six military servicemen at MOFA's request to serve at the Taiwan Medical Mission in Swaziland and four

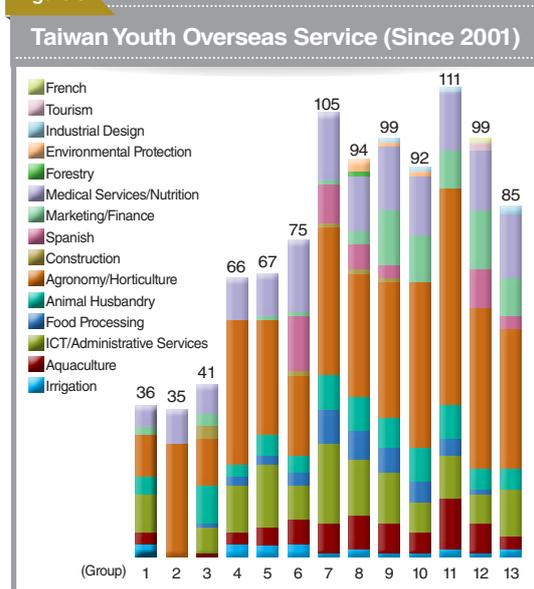
military servicemen to serve at the Taiwan Medical Mission in São Tomé and Príncipe, and one other to provide ICT-related expertise in Tuvalu. The remaining 74 draftees were then assigned to serve on a variety of other TaiwanICDF projects originally commissioned by MOFA.

In terms of the overall effectiveness of the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service to date, the government has come to see the service as a key element of Taiwan's overseas assistance — a valuable pool of human resources that provides Taiwan's overseas missions with a timely, legal and effective means of assisting partner countries' development.

In addition, in terms of contributing to society, servicemen not only leave the service with their language and professional skills much improved, but with a greater familiarity with the people and culture of many different countries. They also understand development opportunities in developing countries. With these advantages, graduates of the service are in a prime position to do further overseas assistance work. As such, the service has certainly achieved its objective of nurturing expertise in the field of foreign aid.

As a case in point, as of November 2013 some 93 former servicemen had participated in the TaiwanICDF's projects at home or overseas. This figure demonstrates the program's concrete contribution to the quality of human resources in Taiwan.

Figure 5



Interview—He Yu-syuan, Taiwan Youth Overseas Service:

Ten Months that Helped Me to Find Myself and Find My Place in the World

In September 2013 He Yu-syuan was discharged from the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service, an alternative form of military service overseen by the TaiwanICDF, having spent the best part of the year serving at our Taiwan Technical Mission in Belize.

“It was a special experience,” he says now, looking back over his 10-month period of service. “It really improved my people skills and boosted my international perspective.”

Genial and mature, Yu-syuan was born in 1987 and holds a master’s degree from National Chiayi University’s (NCYU) Department of Food Science. He explains that during his freshman year at NCYU, he took part in cultural exchanges and activities with a sister university in Xian, China, which really opened his eyes and cemented his ambitions. He was sure he wanted to explore the world beyond Taiwan after he graduated, and so, with the encouragement of senior classmates, he decided to sit for the exams needed to become a qualified food technician, and then applied for the Taiwan Youth Overseas Service.

After completing three weeks of compulsory basic training, six weeks of professional training from the TaiwanICDF, and then travelling over 30 hours, including transferring and waiting for flights, Yu-syuan was thrilled to find himself in Belize, in a time zone 14 hours removed from Taiwan.

“When I’d just arrived, although I was fully prepared, it was still my first time in such a distant country,” he recalls. “I not only had to deal with culture shock, but I also had to adapt my work of assisting in projects to get along with my fellow servicemen at the Taiwan Technical Mission and my superiors, and in my interactions with local residents on issues.”

Adept in Solving Problems, Assisting Project Transfer

As part of his involvement in our Food Processing Project in Belize, Yu-syuan was responsible for assisting in the management of a microbiology lab and for transferring related project components. To ensure that local participants would be able to work independently and that basic concepts would become ingrained into operations at the lab, Yu-syuan worked patiently, going over certain practices again and again in strict compliance with standard operating procedures, progressively but rapidly building up participants’ knowledge of food safety.

Fernando Yeh, chief of the Taiwan Technical Mission in Belize, says that in addition to his professional knowledge, Ye-syuan really impressed



To ensure that local participants would be able to work independently and that basic concepts would become ingrained into operations at their lab, Yu-syuan went over certain practices again and again in strict compliance with standard operating procedures.

with his active approach toward solving problems. During his period of service, Ye-syuan assisted 35 women’s training groups, trained students, spoke at seminars, conducted demonstrations and devised a series of posters. He also invested a great deal of time and effort in assisting local counterparts to gain the skills needed to take over the project. This earned him an “outstanding serviceman” award from the Ministry of the Interior.

So what was Ye-syuan’s biggest gain over his 10 months as a serviceman? “I always thought my English was poor and I worried about speaking up,” he says. “But after doing six weeks of language training with the TaiwanICDF and then working with people in Belize, I was not only speaking up, but also completed report after report in English. It really gave me confidence.”

That’s not all. Yu-syuan also used his free time to explore the Mayan remains found throughout Belize and deepened his understanding of folk customs, participating in festivals and learning to appreciate different performances and rituals. Meanwhile, his mission chief and colleagues regularly shared their experiences of serving in a range of far-flung locations, discussing intercultural communication and the way that they’d needed to adjust their own perspectives and attitudes. For Yu-syuan, this apprenticeship was an opportunity to think about the future.

“Serving overseas helped me to look at how adaptable I am and find out how I function under pressure,” says Yu-syuan in conclusion. He would advise other servicemen not to take the way things are done in Taiwan and just try to apply that elsewhere in the world. Instead, you should readjust yourself to the local mentality and pace.

“After all,” he says, “the biggest benefit of youth lies in being able to adapt to your environment. It’s not about making your environment adapt to you!”

2013 Cooperating Countries and Projects





- Overseas Missions
- Technical/Humanitarian Assistance Projects
- Lending and Investment Projects
- International Human Resources Development Projects
(excluding Workshops and Scholarship Programs)
- Medical Project in Pacific Island Countries
- TaiwanICDF Overseas Volunteers Service
- Taiwan Youth Overseas Service

Central America

1 Guatemala						
2 Honduras						
3 Belize						
4 Nicaragua						
5 El Salvador						
6 Panama						

South America

7 Ecuador						
8 Paraguay						

Caribbean

9 Dominican Republic						
10 Haiti						
11 St. Vincent and the Grenadines						
12 St. Kitts and Nevis						
13 St. Lucia						

Africa

14 Swaziland						
15 The Gambia						
16 São Tomé and Príncipe						
17 Burkina Faso						
18 South Africa						
19 South Sudan						

Europe and West Asia

20 Romania						
21 Moldova						
22 Bahrain						
23 Saudi Arabia						
24 Turkey						
25 Azerbaijan						
26 Mongolia						
27 Belarus						

Asia-Pacific

28 Papua New Guinea							
29 Tuvalu							
30 Palau							
31 Solomon Islands							
32 Marshall Islands							
33 Fiji							
34 Indonesia							
35 Nauru							
36 Kiribati							
37 Thailand							
38 India							